

**Michigan Department of
Community Health**

Healthy Homes Section

2012

**Your Family's Monthly
Guide to a Healthy Home**



Home Evacuation



What is carbon monoxide?

- It is a gas with no smell or color that prevents your body from getting the oxygen it needs
- It can be caused by leaking or broken furnaces, fireplaces, kerosene space heaters, running motors, and more

What causes house fires?

- Unattended cooking, broken cooking appliances, and grease build-up
- Smoking cigarettes in the home
- Heating sources such as space heaters or fireplaces

What you can do:

- ☐ Install a carbon monoxide detector between the bedrooms and the furnace in your home
- ☐ Install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers on every level of your home
- ☐ Create an escape plan for when smoke and carbon monoxide detectors sound, then practice it with everyone in the home
- ☐ Replace smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries every six months

Resources:

- www.Firesafety.gov

Carbon monoxide poisoning and household fires are more likely to occur in the winter – know how to evacuate your home.

January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2 New Year's Day (Observed)	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Indoor Air Quality



Did you know...

- Gases from cooking, burning fuel, or smoking tobacco products can be dangerous
- For good indoor air quality, fresh air from the outdoors needs to be let into your home
- Chemicals in household products such as paint, scented sprays, and cleaning products are released into the air and must be removed by increasing air flow
- Radon is a colorless, odorless, cancer-causing gas found in one in eight Michigan homes

What you can do:

- ☐ Open windows in the home – even in winter – for 30 minutes every day to let in fresh air
- ☐ Use a fan in the kitchen after cooking to circulate fresh air
- ☐ Instead of using scented sprays, find the source of odor and remove it
- ☐ Test for radon using a test kit from your local health department or hardware store
- ☐ Keep the humidity in your home around 50%
- ☐ Change furnace and central air filters every month

Resources

- www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/careforyourair.html

We spend 90% of our time indoors – make sure your family has clean air to breathe at home.

February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 Prophet's Birthday	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 Washington's Birthday	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Mold and Moisture

Did you know...

- Mold grows in dark, damp areas of your home such as basements, bathrooms, windows, and under sinks
- Mold can grow in just two days
- Mold is an asthma trigger that makes asthma symptoms worse
- Landlords are required to fix building-related moisture problems

What you can do:

- Fix leaks right away and clean water damage with products such as vinegar and baking soda, or soap and water
- Use green cleaning products to clean moldy things – if you can't clean off the mold, throw it away
- Clean and repair the gutters on your house
- Use downspout extenders to keep water flowing away from your home
- Connect your dryer vent to the outside of your home
- Keep kids away from areas of the home with mold issues
- Always remove moisture when showering or bathing by turning on a fan or opening a window
- Use a dehumidifier to keep humidity around 50%

Resources

- www.epa.gov/mold/moldresources.html



Mold can grow quickly and many people are allergic to it – keep your family healthy by fixing leaks and removing all mold.

March 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Home Maintenance Checklist



Every Month

- ☐ Check and change furnace and air conditioner filters if necessary
- ☐ Check for signs of rodents and insects inside and outside the home
- ☐ Check for water damage inside the home, then find and fix the source of the leak

Once in Fall and Spring

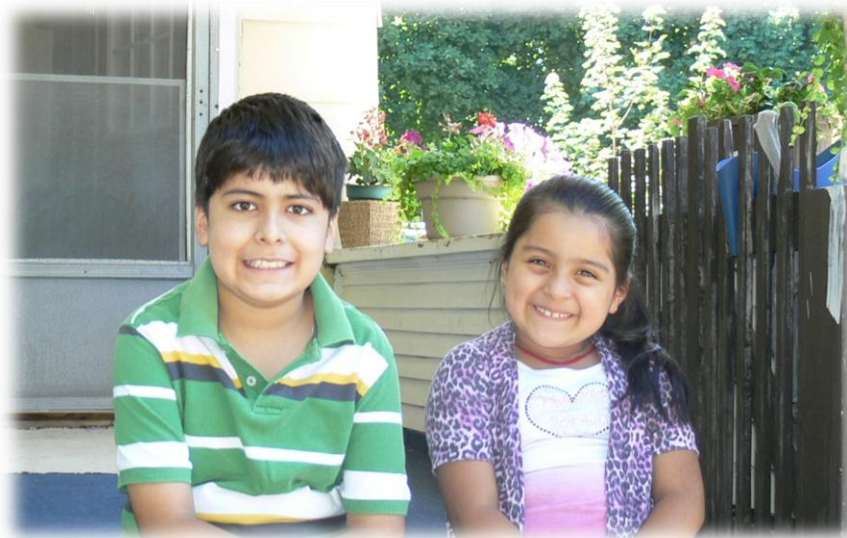
- ☐ Clean gutters and make sure they are draining at least 4 feet away from home
- ☐ Check for wet spots in the basement and make sure floor drain is working
- ☐ Look for leaks at window and door sills
- ☐ Make sure the dryer is correctly venting to the outside
- ☐ Clean and make sure exhaust fans in kitchen and bathroom are working
- ☐ Check the condition of roof shingles – are they worn, missing, or brittle?
- ☐ Look for peeling paint on the outside of the home
- ☐ Repair any broken and cracked glass
- ☐ Check for damaged electrical cords
- ☐ Check the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

Maintaining your home will make it healthier for your family and save you money.

April 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 Good Friday	7 First Day of Passover
8 Easter Sunday	9	10	11	12	13	14 Last Day of Passover
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Asthma Triggers



Did You Know...

- Asthma triggers can lead to asthma attacks
- Triggers include smoke, mold, dust mites, scented products, pets in the home, and pests like mice and cockroaches
- Tobacco smoke and cockroaches can cause asthma to develop in children who do not already have asthma

What you can do:

- ☐ Know your child's asthma triggers
- ☐ If you smoke, only smoke outdoors
- ☐ Wash your child's sheets, blankets, and stuffed animals every week in hot water
- ☐ Remove mold using green cleaning products
- ☐ Dust and vacuum your home once a week, including carpet, upholstered furniture, curtains and blinds
- ☐ Change your furnace filter every month
- ☐ Seal cracks and holes in the home to keep pests out
- ☐ Keep pets out of your child's bedroom

Resources:

- www.GetAsthmaHelp.org
- www.aafa.org

A photograph of a woman with dark hair lying in bed, sleeping peacefully with her eyes closed. She is wearing a white pillowcase. The image is framed with a blue dashed border.

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Mention/Enter Promo Code **MDCH2012**
Expires on **December 31st, 2012**

Health & Home™
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We help you feel better and live healthier

**May is Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month –
keep your home healthy for children with asthma.**

May 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		

Home Safety



Fire Hazards:

- ☐ Do not overload outlets – use a surge protector
- ☐ Install smoke detectors on every level and near all bedrooms

Infants and Children:

- ☐ Adults and older children should learn first aid and CPR
- ☐ Babies should sleep alone, on their back, and in a crib without pillows or stuffed toys
- ☐ Use cabinet locks to protect children from pesticides, medicines, and other harmful chemicals
- ☐ Never leave a child alone in the bathtub
- ☐ Keep firearms out of reach of children
- ☐ Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, scooter, or ATV
- ☐ Use outlet covers if you have children under the age of five

Slips and Falls:

- ☐ Clean clutter from the stairs
- ☐ Make sure that handrails are securely attached to the wall
- ☐ Put nightlights in the bedroom, bathroom, and hallway
- ☐ Use window locks to prevent falls

Resources:

- www.HomeSafetyCouncil.org

June is Home Safety Month – simple decisions you make now can make your home safer for the entire family.

June 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Isra and Mi'raj Father's Day	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Lead Poisoning



Did you know...

- Lead paint may be in your home if it was built before 1978.
- All children should be tested for lead between ages 1 and 2
- Lead poisoning can slow a child's learning ability and cause behavior problems
- Infants can be at high risk due to lead dust on floors, windows, and toys

What you can do:

- ☐ Talk to your doctor about having your child under the age of 6 tested for lead
- ☐ Hire a licensed professional to test your home for lead paint
- ☐ Maintain painted surfaces in the home
- ☐ Use soap and water to clean up all paint chips, especially on window sills, porches, and where children play outside
- ☐ Wash children's hands before eating and sleeping
- ☐ Make sure your children are eating foods with plenty of calcium and iron, such as milk, beans, and broccoli

Resources:

www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/

www.Michigan.gov/leadsafe

Lead poisoning can affect children for a lifetime, but you can prevent it by keeping your home clean.

July 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 Ramadan begins	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Secondhand Smoke



Did you know...

- Secondhand smoke contains over 50 cancer-causing agents and over 200 known poisons
- Secondhand smoke can cause asthma and asthma attacks
- Exposure to 2 hours of secondhand smoke is equal to a child smoking 4 cigarettes

What you can do:

- ☐ Find a way to quit smoking
- ☐ Only smoke outside the home
- ☐ Find a jacket that you only wear when smoking outdoors
- ☐ Wash your hands after smoking
- ☐ Avoid smoking in cars that children also ride in – even if they are not there
- ☐ Talk to family members and friends about not smoking around children

Resources:

- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW
- www.Smokefree.gov

Keeping smoke away from your children today will make them healthier for the rest of their lives.

August 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Laylat al-Qadr	15	16	17	18
19 Eid-al-Fitr	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Integrated Pest Management



Did You Know...

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is the safest method of controlling mice, rats, cockroaches, and all other pests
- Prevention is the best way to control pests
- The fewer pesticides and poisons you use to control pests, the safer your family will be
- “Bug bombs” and sprays leave poisonous chemicals in the home for years after even a single use

What you can do:

- ☐ Keep pests out of the home by caulking around windows, doors, and cracks
- ☐ Fix water leaks in the home
- ☐ Clean food and crumbs from floors and countertops, use sealed food containers, and use a trashcan with a lid
- ☐ Clean up clutter in the home that pests can hide in
- ☐ Use traps and sticky gel pads to catch pests
- ☐ Prevent bed bugs by not purchasing used mattresses or used upholstered furniture
- ☐ If you use pesticides, keep them away from children and carefully follow the instructions

Resources:

- www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm
- www.Michigan.gov/emergingdiseases

**Pests are looking for food, water, and shelter –
prevent your home from becoming theirs!**

September 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 Rosh Hashana	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24	25	26 Yom Kippur	27	28	29

Green, Healthy, and Sustainable Cleaning



Did you know...

- Many common household cleaning products contain harmful chemicals such as chlorine bleach, ammonia, and volatile organic chemicals
- Products labeled as “green” are not necessarily safe – check the ingredients and use only as directed
- Cleaning chemicals remain on surfaces and in the air even after you have finished cleaning

What you can do:

- ☐ Determine if there is a less-toxic substitute for cleaning products you regularly use
- ☐ Use non-toxic cleaners such as baking soda, vinegar, and liquid oil soap
- ☐ Limit the use of disinfectants to the cooking area or when people are sick
- ☐ Follow directions on the label when using cleaning products
- ☐ Use a vacuum or a mop on hardwood floors instead of sweeping with a broom
- ☐ Find out about your community’s recycling program and start a recycling system in your home

Resources

- www.InformedGreenSolutions.org

Choose to make your home safer with green and healthy cleaning practices

October 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Last Day of Sukkot	8 Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 El-al-Adha	27
28	29	30	31 Halloween			

Finding a Healthy Home



What to ask when looking for a new home:

- ☐ What year was the home built? *If it was before 1978, it may contain lead-based paint.*
- ☐ Is the roof in good condition? *Look for parts that are sagging or worn. Replacing the roof in the future will be expensive.*
- ☐ Is the home well insulated? *If not, this will cause high heating bills.*
- ☐ Can you see water damage or mold anywhere in the house? *Pay special attention to sinks, ceilings, and windows.*
- ☐ Is there evidence of pests like mice or cockroaches? *Look for droppings, chew marks, and dead insects, especially in the kitchen.*
- ☐ Can you tell if previous residents smoked or had pets? *Pet allergens and smoke residue can remain in the home long after previous occupants have left.*
- ☐ Can you smell water damage, mold, or mildew in the basement? *If so, water may be leaking into the basement.*
- ☐ Are the water heater and furnace in good condition? *Well-maintained appliances will last longer and save money on energy bills.*

Resources

Finding a Healthy Home Fact Sheet:
www.Michigan.gov/leadsafe

Finding a new home can mean a healthy new start for your family if you know what to look for.

November 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9	10
11 Veterans Day	12 Veterans Day (observed)	13	14	15 Muharram/ New Year	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Household Hazardous Waste



Did you know...

- Household products are considered hazardous if they can harm humans
- Children are more at risk because they can be harmed by smaller amounts of a hazardous material
- When incorrectly disposed of, household hazardous waste can have a serious impact on the environment

What you can do:

- ☐ Find a local hazardous waste drop-off event
- ☐ Always follow directions when mixing products
- ☐ Always store all chemicals safely out of reach of children and in their original container
- ☐ Never dump products down the drain or flush them down the toilet
- ☐ Only buy what you need so you won't have extras

Resources:

- Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222
- Call your local or state health department to find out how to safely get rid of hazardous waste

Hazardous household chemicals include: paint, fuels, cosmetics, cleaning products, fluorescent lights, pesticides, electronics, medicines, and more.

December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 First day of Chanukah	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Last day of Chanukah	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 Christmas Eve New Year's Eve 31	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa beings	27	28	29

Nutrition



Did You Know...

- Obesity is one of the most serious health concerns children face
- By eating right, you can prevent diseases such as diabetes or high blood pressure
- Eating healthy can be very affordable
- Fruits and vegetables have vitamins, minerals, and fiber and are low in calories

What you can do:

- ☐ Buy bread, pasta, and snacks made with whole wheat
- ☐ Eat home-cooked meals more often so that you know exactly what went into your food
- ☐ Try preparing meatless meals by substituting beans and peas for meat
- ☐ Plan meals ahead of time so that you can purchase healthy ingredients
- ☐ Buy fresh fruit and vegetables when they are in season
- ☐ Serve fruit as dessert after meals
- ☐ Give your child 100% fruit juice, water, or low-fat milk instead of sugary soda
- ☐ Serve smaller portions and eat slowly
- ☐ Instead of salt, use herbs, spices, or garlic in your cooking

Resources:

- www.MyPyramid.gov

**We develop lifelong eating habits as children –
set your children on the right path for a healthy life.**

January 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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